

FISH & WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: February 13, 2014

Agenda Item: 2014 – 2015 Bison Hunting Seasons, Quota Ranges and HD Boundaries

Division: Wildlife

Action Needed: Final Action

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 10 minutes

Background

Season structures and hunting district boundaries are adopted biennially for most game species. This happens every other year between December and Final adoptions in February. In proposing regulations to the Commission, FWP proposes adopting the existing (2013) structure except for specific changes. Proposals are based on population status and/or other circumstances.

For the 2014 and 2015 bison season, structure changes include increased quotas, quota ranges, a season framework with two rather than three periods, and adjustments to district boundaries contingent on the outcome of the current MEPA process to expand the tolerance area (boundaries would remain as they were in 2013 if there is no expansion to tolerance area).

Final proposals are unchanged from the tentative proposals except for additional proposed authorization for FWP to identify and apply bison hunters in management efforts that may be conducive to hunting and are outside and/or in addition to the described hunting season and open areas.

Public Involvement Process & Results

In addition to public comment at the Dec. 12 Commission meeting, public comment ran through 5 p.m. Jan. 24, 2014. Comments and a comment summary were forwarded to the Commission.

Alternatives and Analysis

Proposals may be adopted as proposed, with adjustment, with additions, with deletions or no change from 2013 (status quo). No change would challenge the supporting justifications behind proposals.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale

Rationales for individual proposals have been included in Commission information packets and may be further articulated at the Feb. 13 Commission meeting.

Proposed Motion

I move the Commission adopt the final 2014 and 2015 Bison Hunting Seasons and Hunting Districts as presented by FWP to include additional authority to identify and apply bison hunters in management efforts that may be conducive to hunting and are outside and/or in addition to the described hunting season and open areas. I also move to adopt all other portions of the previous 2012-2013 bison season regulations not affected by the Commission's actions today.